

## Community Medical Transportation for Elderly and/or Disabled 2001-2002 Year-end Summary

The Community Medical Transportation Task Force (CMTTF), which was formed in 1993, has continued to work towards the long-term goal of ensuring that the Lincoln community has adequate, affordable and accessible transportation to medical services for individuals who because of illness, physical disability, mental disability or advanced age are unable to drive or use public transportation independently. When adequate, affordable and accessible transportation isn't available, the impact is widespread. Independence is sacrificed, medical appointments are not made or are missed so that treatable conditions become more severe, even critical. Ambulances and emergency rooms are used when not necessary. All of these factors cause an increase in medical costs.

The CMTTF has worked this year to determine the primary barriers to reaching the long-term goal. The determination was done by looking closely at each service provider and the processes to access them. Through flow charts (see attachment), surveys and discussions, it was concluded that adequate and accessible services are available. The following table shows the numbers of available and accessible vehicles by the primary providers.

### NUMBER OF AVAILABLE VEHICLES

PROVIDER	WHEELCHAIR AND AMBULATORY	AMBULATORY ONLY	TOTAL
Handivan	9	0	9
Madonna	14	0	14
Transport Plus	2	7	9
Servant Cab	3	32	35
TOTAL	26	39	65

At the present time in Lincoln, there are a sufficient number of available and accessible vehicles to handle the medical transportation needs of the elderly and/or disabled. The Lincoln community medical system is as strong as the weakest link which has been identified as transportation. While availability and accessibility are strong, the weak link occurs because of affordability.

The limited number of affordable trips causes the problems for the Lincoln community medical system. Lincoln City StarTran Handivan is the only service that meets the criteria of affordability. Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act prevent the setting of priorities on ridership. Service must be on a first come first serve basis. With this factor, the StarTran Handivan can't be the solution to the community medical needs. The following table shows the costs to the rider of the various service providers.

### COST TO RIDER FOR ONE-WAY TRIP

PROVIDER	WHEELCHAIR	AMBULATORY
StarTran Handivan	\$2.00	\$2.00
Madonna	\$10.00/\$15.00	\$10.00/\$15.00
Transport Plus	\$20.00	\$10.00
Servant Cabs	\$2.00 start up plus \$2.25 per mile	\$2.00 start up plus \$2.25 per mile
Lincoln Fire and Rescue	\$310 plus \$8.25 per mile	\$310 plus \$8.25 per mile
Midwest Medical	\$310 plus \$8.25 per mile	\$310 plus \$8.25 per mile

Note: Madonna's costs are offset by grants from several sources thus lowering the price for citizens living independently.

Specialized transportation is costly for the individual who has to utilize it, but it is also costly for the taxpayers that provide additional funding for the StarTran Handivan and Medicaid.

### COST PER STARTRAN HANDIVAN TRIP

PAYER	PER TRIP COST	BUDGET ALLOCATION
City	\$25.06	78.2%
State	.66	2.05%
Federal	\$3.92	12.2%
Client or Medicaid	\$2.00	6.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$31.64</b>	<b>\$969,989</b>

Note: Figures are from fiscal year 2000-2001. Costs for StarTran Handivan represent services for all eligible clients and not just for medical transportation.

StarTran Handivan service is an expensive but necessary service for disabled individuals who are not able to use public transportation. The service is mandated through the Americans with Disabilities Act and must represent service at least comparable to the regularly available public transportation.

Transportation through Medicaid is handled through Nebraska Health and Human Services. Statewide, Medicaid transportation in 1993 cost approximately \$600,000 compared to today the cost is close to \$8,000,000. (Medicaid covers transportation for more than medical needs and this total includes recipients beyond the elderly and disabled.) In Lancaster County fiscal year 2002, \$706,137 was spent on Medicaid medical transportation.

### CONCERNS ABOUT AFFORDABILITY

- Transportation must be affordable to the client, but the provider must also be able to cover the cost of service.
- There is a current need for an increase in affordable transportation. The following table indicates that the need for affordable medical transportation will continue to increase because the population is aging.

# POPULATION STATISTICS FOR LANCASTER COUNTY

CATEGORY	1990	2000	2010
Population	215,641	251,291	258,000 (est.)
Over 65		25,179	
Over 65 & Disabled		9441	
Under 65 & Disabled		20,097	
Eligible for StarTran Handivan		(2002) 1500 543/wheelchair	
Need Dialysis	(1993) 42	(2002) 205	300 (est.)

- The need for dialysis continues to grow. Scheduling return times can be difficult as treatment varies and can affect the end time of each session. All three Lincoln dialysis centers have similar appointment times which means that trips to multiple sites are difficult to schedule.
- The cost of \$10 to \$20 a trip might not seem prohibitive, but for an individual with on going needs it soon becomes overwhelming. See next table for examples. Medicare and most insurance companies do not cover the cost of routine transportation.

Individual needing dialysis three times per week living at 48<sup>th</sup> and NW Knight and going to the Dialysis Center at 7910 O Street.

PROVIDER	COST TO RIDER FOR ONE WAY TRIP	PROJECTED COST FOR ONE YEAR
StarTran Handivan	\$2.00	\$624
Madonna	\$15.00	\$4,680
Transport Plus	\$10 ambulatory \$20 wheelchair	\$3,120 \$6,242
Servant Cab	\$29.00	\$9,248

Individual needing chemotherapy five times a week for three weeks (30 trips) for three cycles in a year (90 trips). From Cotner Center at 66<sup>th</sup> and Holdrege to 6041 Village Drive.

PROVIDER	COST TO RIDER FOR ONE WAY TRIP	PROJECTED COST FOR ONE YEAR
StarTran Handivan	\$2.00	\$180
Madonna	\$15.00	\$1,350
Transport Plus	\$10.00 ambulatory \$20.00 wheelchair	\$900 \$1,800
Servant Cab	\$17.40	\$1,566

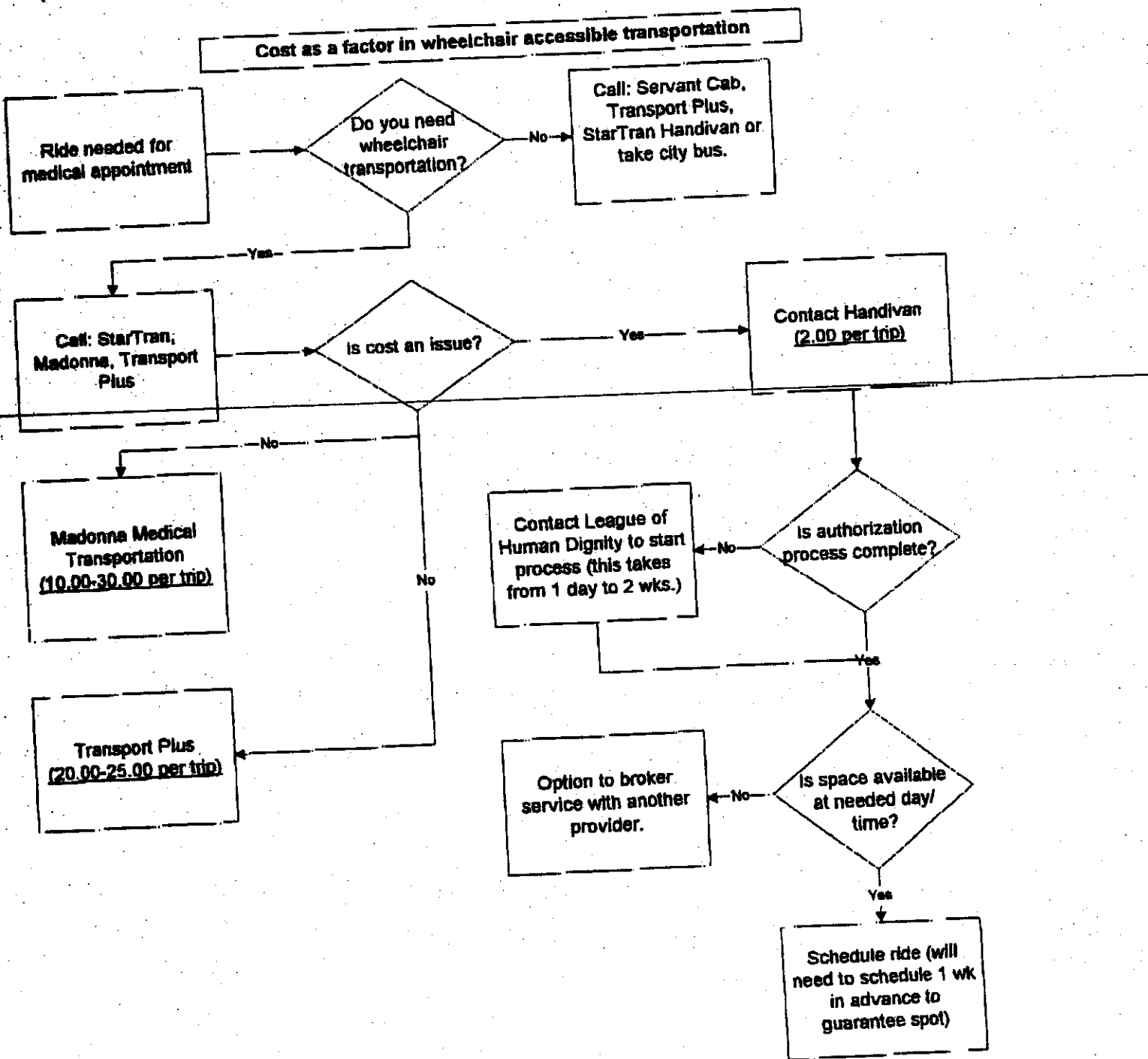
Individual needing transportation to an average of two medical appointments per month totaling 48 trips in a year. 27 <sup>th</sup> and South Street to 1500 South 48 <sup>th</sup> .		
PROVIDER	COST TO RIDER FOR ONE WAY TRIP	PROJECTED COST FOR ONE YEAR
StarTran Handivan	\$2.00	\$96.00
Madonna	\$15.00	\$480.00
Transport Plus	\$10.00 ambulatory	\$480.00
	\$20.00 wheelchair	\$960.00
Servant Cab	\$7.15	\$343.20

- Lincoln Fire and Rescue reported that 714 non-emergency calls were received from hospitals over a 5-month period. Of these 145 could have left the hospital in a wheelchair and avoided the \$310.00 plus charge. Lincoln Fire and Rescue also notes that often these charges are not recovered.
- Senior citizens and others with disabilities are moving to assisted living and long term care facilities because they are then provided medical transportation. In a recent survey CMT riders were asked, "Would you be able to live at home if transportation services were not available?" Sixty percent answered "no". One rider who answered "yes" added, "but it would be a big hardship for my children".

#### ACHEIVEMENTS

- Providers are also competitors but have worked together on the CMTTF to solve medical transportation problems.
- Through CMTTF, Lincoln Fire and Rescue has made progress toward solving the concerns about inappropriate use of ambulance services.
- Through CMTTF, an agreement was negotiated with NHHS to increase payment for Madonna to an amount closer to the actual cost.
- To increase awareness of all providers and better utilize each service, the CMTTF developed a brochure, which provides information about all medical transportation providers. This brochure has been distributed to health providers, human service agencies and senior housing facilities.
- The Community Health Endowment has provided funding. Initially to allow Madonna to continue operating their service while the CMTTF reconvened. Currently a three-year grant, which will end in 2004, provides money for an information and referral process and to offset losses to Madonna's transportation service.
- The Lincoln Community Foundation provided funds to ensure that the reduced rate to those in the community continued during this time period.
- The city and county have provided funding to compensate for the reduced rates for medical transportation. This money is available only to Madonna.
- StarTran Handivan has contracted with other providers to provide service when space on the Handivan is not available.
- Physician offices have been cooperative in allowing more flexibility in scheduling so that transportation needs can be met.

**Cost as a factor in wheelchair accessible transportation**



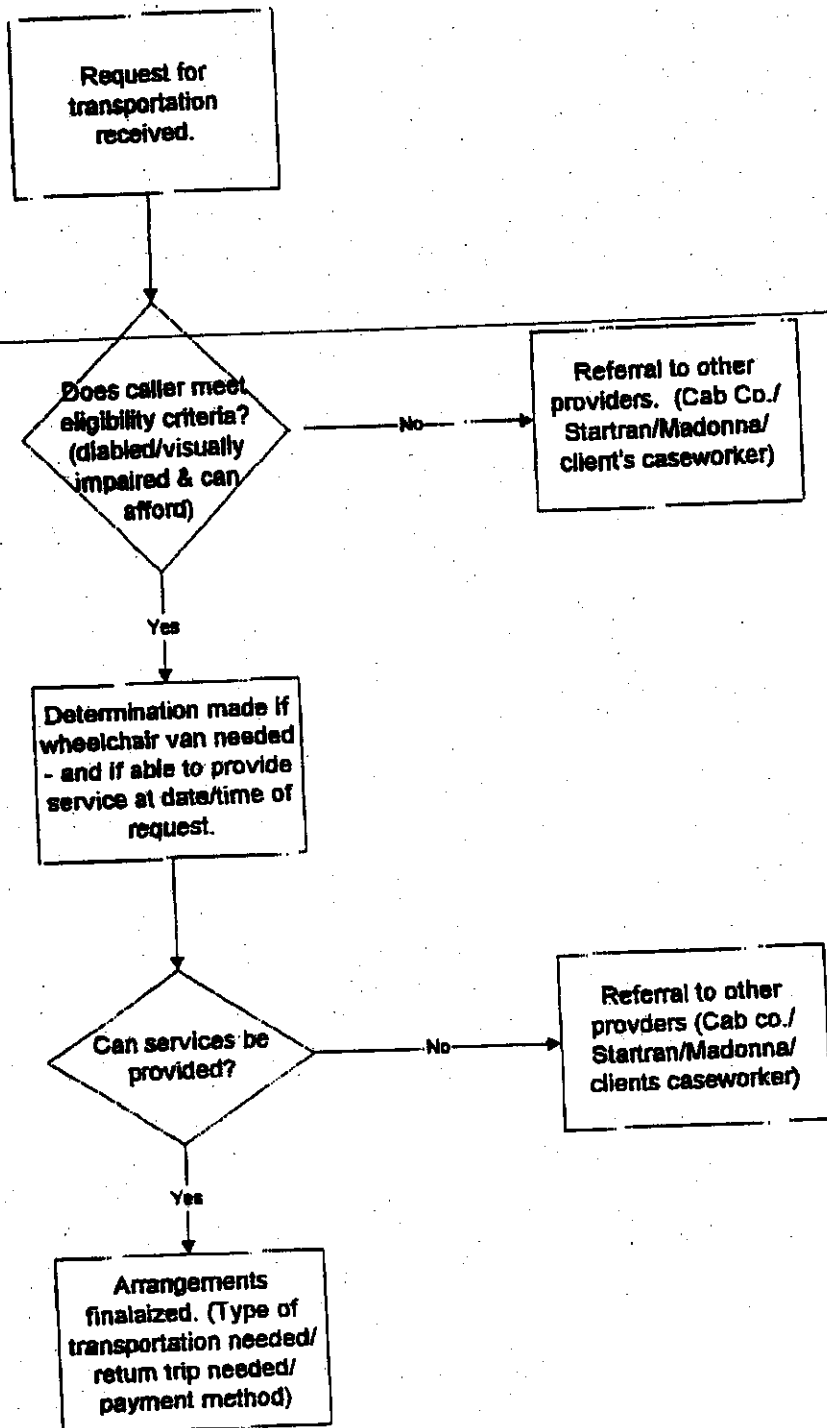
**NOTES:**

Alternatives to Handivan (2.00 rides) cost 20.00-30.00. Handivan offers limited service on the weekends. This results in Nursing Homes refusing to accept patients on dialysis that require treatments on the weekends.

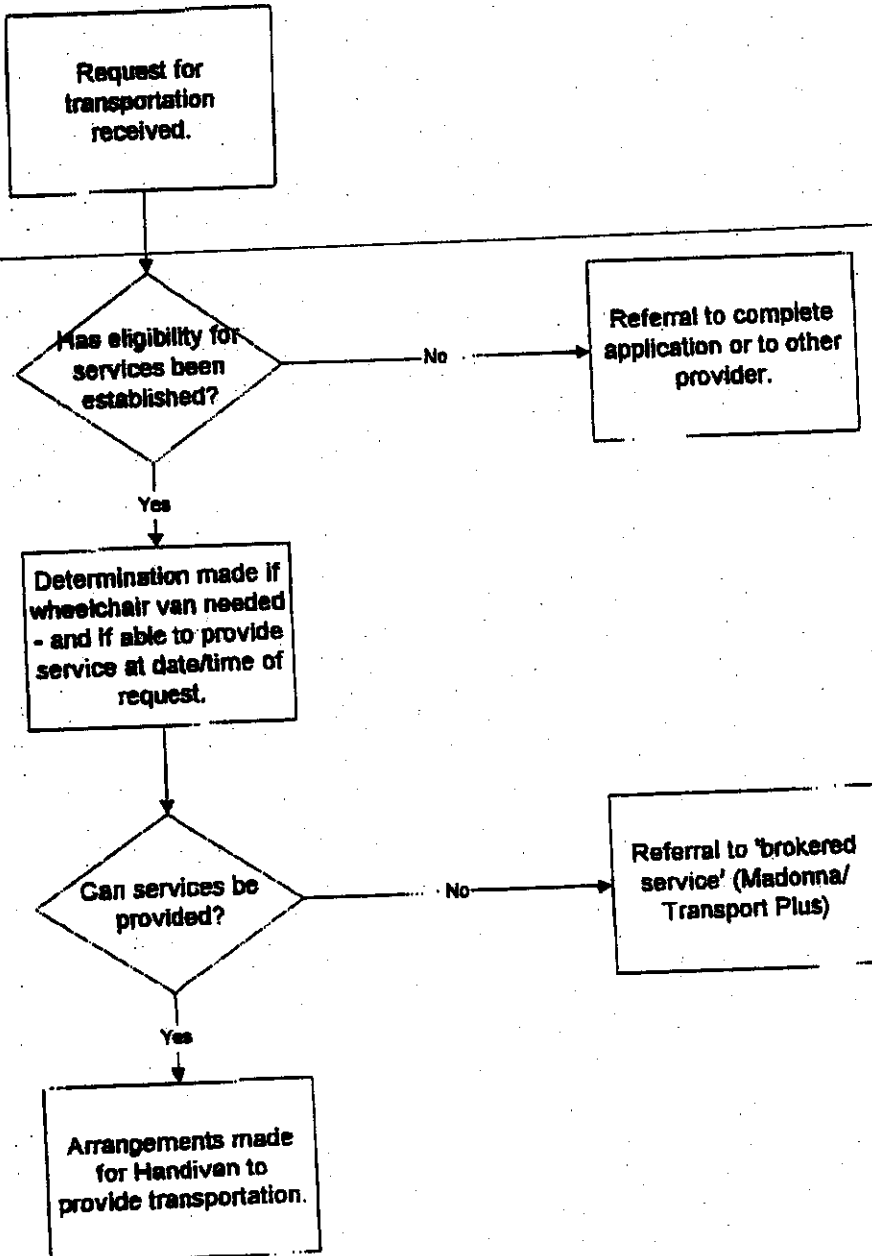
## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- Long term care and assisted living facilities need to be more involved in the CMTTF creating formal relationships with providers.
- Pool providers and resources to offer reduced rates and to keep assisted providers available to the community.
- Apply for new and long-term grants to support providers of medical transportation.
- Work with NHHS to be certain that all providers have contracts that adequately compensate them for their services.
- Continue to plan with dialysis centers so that as patient numbers increase the impact on medical transportation is given consideration.
- Lincoln Fire and Rescue to work with hospitals to increase use of non-emergent community resources.

# Transport Plus Scheduling Process

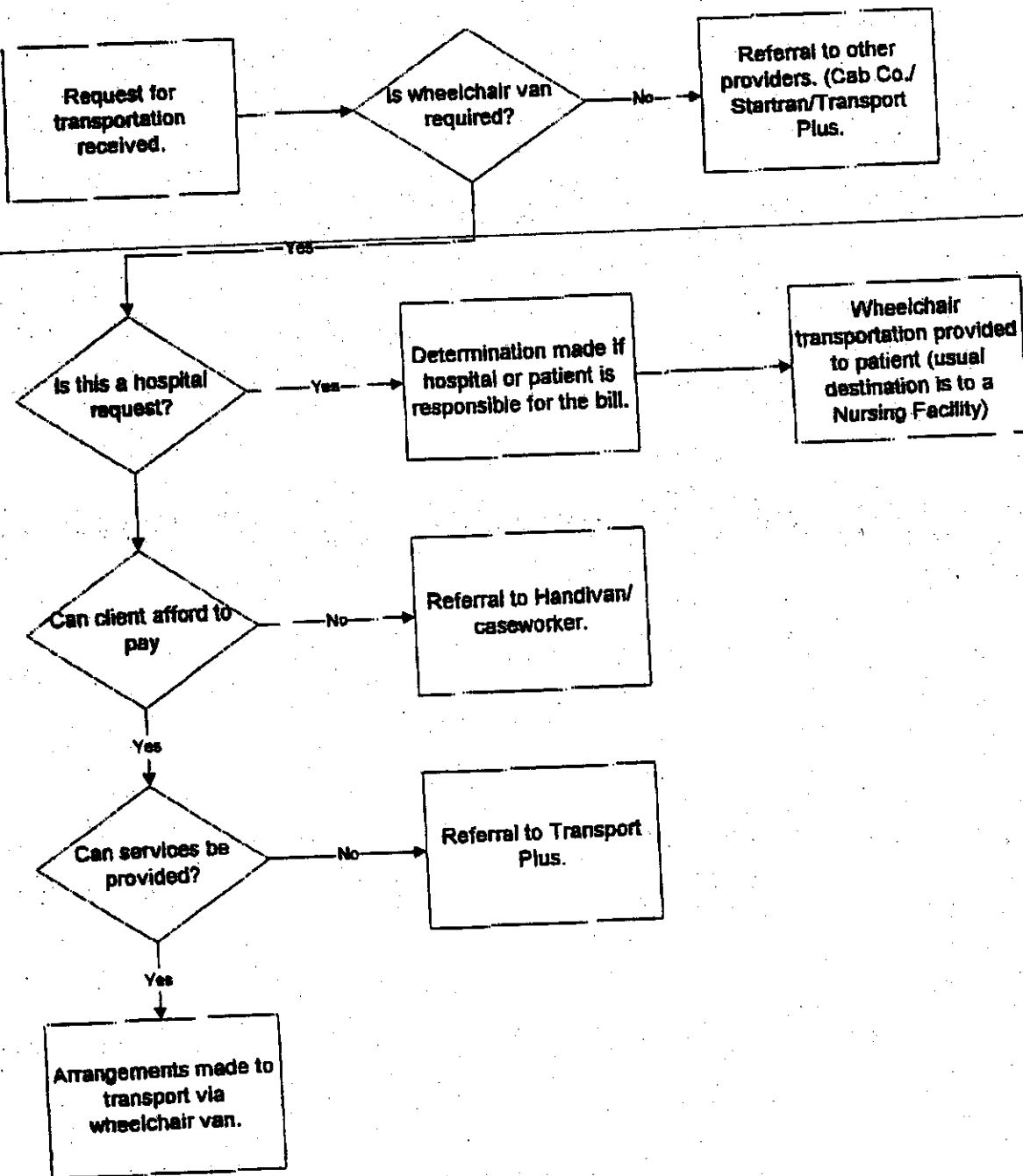


# Startran Special Transportation Scheduling Process





# Madonna Medical Transportation Scheduling Process



## Community Medical Transportation Task Force

*Janet Coleman, Chair	Consumer
*Brian Praeuner, Vice Chair	StarTran
Marcia Alber	Nebraska Health and Human Services
Wende Baker	Community Health Partners Foundation
Kit Boesch	Lancaster County Department of Human Services
*MaryLou Buss	Dialysis Center of Lincoln
*Donna Corey	Servant Cabs
*Susan Epps	Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
*Rich Furasek	Lincoln Fire and Rescue
Mary Jo Gillespie	Lancaster County Medical Society
*Vicki Harding	Transport Plus
Robert Harrison	Nebraska Public Service Commission
Tim Howell	Aging Services
*Paul Jensen	BryanLGH Medical Center
*Linda Knudsen	Advanced Renal Services
Tim Kosier	Region V Services
Richard Lewis	Lincoln Medical Education Foundation
Pat Lopez	Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
Robin Mahoney	United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County
*Sherrie Meints	Lincoln Fire and Rescue
 Cindy Riekenberg	 League of Human Dignity
Mike Schafer	League of Human Dignity
John Schmidt	Nebraska Public Service Commission
Ann Stivers	Dialysis Center of Lincoln
Jeff Weissert	Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center
Larry Worth	StarTran
Jerry Wray	Nebraska Department of Roads

\*Sub-group addressing priority issue